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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/776,394	02/02/2001	Vincent Bryan	46739/252388	1424

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JOHN S. PRATT, ESQ
KILPATRICK STOCKTON, LLP
1100 PEACHTREE STREET
SUITE 2800
ATLANTA, GA 30309

EXAMINER

STEWART, ALVIN J

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3738

DATE MAILED: 06/27/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/776,394

Applicant(s)

BRYAN ET AL.

Examiner

Alvin J Stewart

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 April 2002.
- 2a) ☒ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4 and 8-21 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) 1-3 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) 4,8-12,15,16 and 19-21 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) 12-14,17 and 18 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 5.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Reissue Applications

The objection under 37 CFR 1.172(a) has been withdrawn.

Response to Amendment

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 4, and 8-19 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 4, 10, 11, 15, 16 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Monson US Patent 4,863,477

Monson discloses an intervertebral implant comprising two supports (4 & 6) having a convex shape (see col. 2, lines 55-63) adapted to mate with concave surfaces on vertebral bodies and a resilient body (30 and 42) interposed between the supports such that the supports are capable of movement relative to the resilient body. Finally, the resilient body has a gasket (ridges (32, 33, 34, 35, 36 and 38)) and a nucleous (mid-section of elements (30 and 42)).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

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(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shepperd US Patent 4,863,476 in view of Michelson US Patent 5,015,247.

Shepperd discloses an implant having two supports (5 & 6) with a convex outer shape and capable of motion relative to each other. Shepperd discloses a small incision in the skin and the cartilage that can be made by the Michelson method. The implant has all the structural limitations in order to be used on the Michelson reference.

Michelson teaches a method of inserting a cylindrical implant between the vertebral bodies. Michelson discloses the steps of: forming mounting holes in vertebral bodies by spikes (see Figs. 1-3), using those holes to mount a bone mill on the spine (see figs. 3 and 4), removing the mill, mounting an intervertebral disc (see Fig. 4) that mate with the vertebral bone walls (see Figs. 4d and 5).

Therefore, for the above reason, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the implanting method of the Michelson reference in order to implant the Shepperd prosthesis between two vertebral bodies for the purpose of increasing the implanting speed and reduce injury to other part of the body.

Claims 9, 20 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Monson US Patent 4,863,477.

Monson discloses the invention substantially as claimed. However, Monson does not disclose a device receiving information about the size, shape, nature of the patient's involved and the step of removing damaged natural spinal disc material from the patient's spine.

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It is common knowledge in the prior art to make a x-ray analysis in a patient's spine for the purpose of determining the exact location of the damage disc tissue, size, and shape.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to make a x-ray analysis in a patient's spine in order to determine the exact location of the damage disc tissue, size, and shape.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1-3 are allowed.

Claims 12-14, 17 and 18 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

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Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Alvin J Stewart whose telephone number is 703-305-0277. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 7:00AM-5:30PM(1 Friday B-week off).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Corrine McDermott can be reached on 703-308-2111. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-305-3590 for regular communications and 703-308-2708 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0858.

AB

AST

June 24, 2002

CK

CORRINE McDERMOTT
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3700